

## Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-11

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R 102239Z MAY 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY KABUL  
INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: LETTER TO NEW YORK TIMES FROM LOUIS DUPREE

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF LETTER DATED MAY 7 SENT TO NEW YORK  
TIMES BY LOUIS DUPREE. LETTER HAS NOT YET BEEN PRINTED IN  
PAPER. BEGIN TEXT

WHEN IS "COMMUNISM" NOT COMMUNISM?  
THE CASE OF AFGHANISTAN

MAY I BE PERMITTED A FEW COMMENTS ON YOUR EDITORIAL OF 5  
MAY, "A COMMUNIST COUP IN AFGHANISTAN?" THESE REMARKS ARE  
BASED ON NEARLY 30 YEARS OF RESEARCH AND WRITING ABOUT  
AFGHANISTAN, AND A PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF SOME OF THE PARTI-  
CIPANTS.

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THE TERM "COMMUNIST" IS, IN MY OPINION, UNJUSTIFIED - AS  
YET. AN OFFICIAL COMMUNIST PARTY HAS NEVER EXISTED IN  
AFGHANISTAN, AND THE CURRENT LEADERS OF THE COMBINED  
LEFTIST KHALQ (THE MASSES) AND PARCHAM (THE BANNER)  
COALITION (WHICH MERGED IN JULY 1977) NEVER ATTENDED- NOR,  
TO MY KNOWLEDGE, HAVE BEEN INVITED TO ATTEND- INTERNATIONAL

COMMUNIST MEETINGS.

IN ADDITION, THE FIRST PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF THE NEW REGIME INSIST THAT THE LEADERSHIP IS NOT COMMUNIST, BUT "NATIONALIST". GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED RADIO AFGHANISTAN REFERS TO NUR MOHAMMAD TARAKI, PRIME MINISTER AND CHAIRMAN OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL, AS A "NATIONALIST AND A REVOLUTIONARY PERSONALITY."

CONTRARY TO SOME PUBLISHED REPORTS, KHALQ AND PARCHAM DO HAVE MANIFESTOS, FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1966. THE FIRST TWO ISSUES OF KHALQ (PUBLISHED JOINTLY ON 11 APRIL 1966) DIVIDED AFGHANISTAN'S PROBLEMS INTO POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL, AND ANNOUNCED ITS POLICIES WERE DESIGNED TO ALLEVIATE "THE BOUNDLESS AGONIES OF THE OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF AFGHANISTAN," AND LINKED THEIR STRUGGLE WITH THAT WHICH BEGAN "WITH THE GREAT OCTOBER REVOLUTION."

THE PROGRAMS ENVISIONED TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY FOR AFGHANISTAN, POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE (INCLUDING NON-ALIGNMENT IN FOREIGN POLICY), LAND REFORM, IMPROVEMENT IN LABOR CONDITIONS, AND SOCIAL EQUALITY.

ALSO, IN SPITE OF RECENT PRESS ACCOUNTS, THE LEFTIST PARTIES HAVE NEVER BEEN ILLEGAL NOR UNDERGROUND. THEY HAVE BEEN EXTRA-LEGAL (LIKE THE FREE MONEY MARKET IN KABUL),  
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SINCE NO LEGISLATION WAS PASSED EITHER PERMITTING OR PROHIBITING POLITICAL PARTIES. THE 1964 CONSTITUTION, HOWEVER, DID CALL FOR THE ENACTMENT OF A POLITICAL PARTY'S LAW. THE FAILURE TO PROMULGATE SUCH A LAW PARTLY ACCOUNTS FOR THE OVERTHROW OF THE MONARCHY IN JULY 1973.

INCIDENTALLY, AS HAS BEEN REPORTED IN THE PRESS, ONE MAJOR GOAL OF THE RECENT REVOLUTION WAS TO REMOVE THE FINAL VESTIGES OF GOVERNMENTAL CONTROL FROM THE HANDS OF THE MOHAMMADZAI LINEAGE OF THE DURRANI PUSHTUN TRIBE, WHICH HAS DOMINATED THE AFGHAN POLITICAL SCENE SINCE ABOUT 1820. EVEN MOHAMMAD DAUD, WHO OUSTED KING MOHAMMAD ZAHIR IN 1973 AND ESTABLISHED THE REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN, WAS FIRST COUSIN AND BROTHER-IN-LAW TO THE DEPOSED MONARCH.

THE LEFTIST LEADERS NOW IN POWER WERE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE 1965-73 PARLIAMENTARY ACTIVITIES. OF THE 21 CABINET MEMBERS (EXCLUDING THE THREE MILITARY), AT LEAST 10 PARTICIPATED IN ELECTIONS, AND FIVE WON SEATS. SO, THEY WERE NEVER REALLY UNDERGROUND, AND THEY DID WORK WITHIN THE ABORTIVE PARLIAMENTARY EXPERIMENT. NONE, TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, EVER EXPRESSED LOYALTY TO ANY COUNTRY

OTHER THAN AFGHANISTAN.

REPORTEDLY, THE NEW GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN SEEKING RECOGNITION (I UNDERSTAND THE USA EXTENDED RECOGNITION ON SATURDAY) BASED ON AN INITIAL FOUR-POINT POLICY: ISLAM, SOCIAL JUSTICE UNDER ISLAM, BI-TARAFI (NON-ALIGNMENT IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, LITERALLY "WITHOUT SIDES"), AND A COMMITMENT TO HONOR ALL AGREEMENTS MADE BY PREVIOUS REGIMES WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS.

BECAUSE OF ITS PROXIMITY TO THE USSR, AFGHANISTAN WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE RUSSIANS NO MATTER WHICH REGIME IS IN POWER. BUT SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN DOMINANCE BY OR SUBSERVIENCE  
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TO. IN THE 19TH-20TH CENTURIES, AFGHANISTAN, AS IT EVOLVED TOWARD NATIONHOOD, MAINTAINED ITS INDEPENDENCE AND ITS NON-ALIGNED POSTURE. AS LONG AS ITS OPTIONS REMAIN OPEN AND NON-COMMUNIST COUNTRIES MAINTAIN NORMAL RELATIONS (INCLUDING REASONABLE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE), AFGHANISTAN WILL REMAIN INDEPENDENT AND NON-ALIGNED. HOPEFULLY, IT WILL CONTINUE TO DEVELOP IN WAYS CONSISTENT WITH ITS OWN CULTURAL PATTERNS.

ONE MAY DEPLORE THE BLOODSHED WHICH ACCOMPANIED THE REVOLUTION (OR ANY REVOLUTION) AND FEEL REMORSE FOR THE DEAD (I KNEW AND WAS GENUINELY FOND OF MANY OF THEM), BUT AN INTELLIGENT, INFORMED AMERICAN PUBLIC (AND AN ENLIGHTENED PRESS) SHOULD AVOID THE LOOSE USE OF THE TERM "COMMUNIST", WITH ALL ITS LATENT MCCARTHYITE INNUENDOS. ALL SHOULD EXAMINE THE WORDS OF THE NEW LEADERS CAREFULLY, FOR GOVERNMENTS, LIKE PERSONS, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY. THE REGIME CLAIMS TO BE ISLAMIC, NATIONALIST, NON-ALIGNED, AND "THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE." THEIR SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS WILL SPEAK LOUDER THAN INNUENDOS. RESPECTFULLY, LOUIS DUPREE. END TEXT. VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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